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MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Sixth Meeting

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST PART* OF THE 12TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 18 February 1997, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chairperson: Mr. ZACKLIN
(Representative of the
Secretary-General)

Chairperson: Mr. OLHAYE (Djibouti)

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* The summary record of the second part of the meeting, to be reconvened in the afternoon, appears as document CRC/SP/SR.12/Add.1.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON, speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, said that since the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 21 new States had ratified the Convention, bringing the total number of States Parties to 189 - very close to the goal of universal ratification.

2. By its resolution 50/155, the General Assembly had approved the amendment adopted by the Conference of States Parties to the Convention to increase the Committee's membership from 10 to 18, and had urged States to take appropriate measures to ensure that acceptance by a two-thirds majority of States Parties could be reached as soon as possible in order for the amendment to enter into force. As of 3 February 1997, only 20 States had accepted the amendment. The increase in membership from 10 to 18 would no doubt contribute to enabling the Committee to expeditiously and effectively meet its mandate as called for by the World Conference on Human Rights. In that connection, the meeting had before it a note by the Secretary-General contained in document CRC/SP/22.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON

3. Mr. MABILANGAN (Philippines) nominated Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti) for the Office of Chairperson.

4. Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti) was elected Chairperson by acclamation.

5. Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti) took the Chair.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (CRC/SP/20)

6. The agenda was adopted.

CREDENTIALS OF THE REPRESENTATIVES

7. The CHAIRPERSON drew attention to rules 2 and 3 of the rules of procedure of the Meetings (CRC/SP/5) and said that the Secretary-General had yet to receive proper credentials from a number of parties represented at the Meeting. He suggested that, in accordance with rule 3, the representatives of those States Parties should be provisionally authorized to participate in the Meeting. He urged them to see to it that their credentials were submitted to the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

8. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF OTHER OFFICERS OF THE MEETING

9. The CHAIRPERSON said that Mr. Boisson (Monaco) and Mr. Illueca (Panama) had been nominated by their respective regional groups for the office of Vice-Chairperson.

10. Mr. BASNYAT (Nepal), nominated Mr. Agathocleous (Cyprus) for the office of Vice-Chairperson.

11. Mr. Boisson (Monaco), Mr. Illueca (Panama) and Mr. Agathocleous (Cyprus) were elected Vice-Chairpersons by acclamation.

ELECTION OF FIVE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 43 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC/SP/21 and Add.1-4)

12. The CHAIRPERSON said that, in accordance with article 43 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, five members were to be elected for a term of four years by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. The names of the candidates nominated by the States Parties were contained in document CRC/SP/21 and Add.1-6.

13. Mr. AL-SHAMMAM (Yemen) said that his delegation was withdrawing its candidate in favour of the candidate of Saudi Arabia.

14. Ms. TREIMANIS (Latvia) said that the candidate nominated by her Government had withdrawn.

15. Mr. HOUANSOU (Benin), asked why the name of his country's candidate did not appear in any of the documents.

16. Ms. QUISUMBING (Secretary) replied that due to the late submission of nominations by some Governments, some of the documents were not yet available. However, they were being processed and would be distributed shortly.

17. Mr. CARREL-BILLARD (France) said that his delegation would like all documents to be distributed in all the official languages.

18. Mr. KIWANUKA (Uganda) supported by Mr. HOUANSOU (Benin) suggested that the Committee should wait until all the documents were available before proceeding with the elections.

19. After a discussion in which Ms. CASTRO DE BARISH (Costa Rica), Mr. CARREL-BILLARD (France), Mr. ZAHID (Morocco), Mr. CABRAL (Guinea-Bissau), Mr. HOUANSOU (Benin), Mr. SEMAKULA KIWANUKA (Uganda), Mr. ERWA (Sudan), Ms. KHALIL (Office of Legal Affairs), Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh), Mr. RUBADIRI (Malawi) and Mr. DLAMINI (Swaziland) took part, The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the Committee should proceed with other matters.

20. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

21. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH, introduced draft resolution CRC/SP/1997/L.1, whereby her delegation had constantly striven to ensure that the States Parties invited those which had not yet done so to notify the Secretary-General of their acceptance of the amendment to article 43, paragraph 2, of the Convention as a matter of priority so as to permit an increase in the membership of the Committee. She added that Cuba and the Philippines had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

22. Mr. FARHADI (Afghanistan) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution.

23. Draft resolution CRC/SP/1997/L.1 was adopted.

24. The CHAIRPERSON said that, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the representatives of Benin and Uganda, he would now suspend the meeting and reconvene later that day once the necessary documents were available.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m.